

THE CHILD STUDY

The Wider Spread of Kindergarten Methods.

THE CHILD AS A TEACHER

Physical Incapacities Must Be Carefully Ascertained to Effect Best Results.

"The most intelligent and persistent study that has been given to the natural history of childhood has come thus far from the kindergartens," says Prof. Earl Barnes, of the Stanford University. Now that this wave of "Child Study" is sweeping over the country, the kindergartens will have to look to their laurels, for the systematic study of the child is being taken up by—shall we say wiser and older heads? or by older heads that are striving to be wiser? People begin to realize that a child is something more than a mere sentiment; that it has been too long assumed that we give and impart to him all that he knows; that we are the ones he is to study, and we have wondered when our ends aimed at failed to meet our expectations. G. Stanley Hall says: "Alas! for the teacher who does not learn more from his children than he can ever hope to teach them." And our own dear teacher, Froebel, himself, has said: "Would you know how to lead the child in this matter? Observe the child, he will teach you what to do." Too long has this counsel been overlooked, but now that it is heeded, and having been tried in a very small way, it is found to be of inestimable value. The desire for means of pursuing "Child Study" is becoming what our detractors are pleased to call "a fad."

Only a very few years ago people would have jeered at the idea of forming a club with the sole idea of studying the individual child, and then comparing his characteristics with those of hundreds of other children in order that the teacher might better understand the material she had to handle. Yet today "Mothers' Clubs" and clubs for "child study" for the sole purpose of studying child character are being organized with the hearty support and commendation of men and women who are devoting their lives endeavoring to solve the imperfect educational problems of our times.

So much literature has lately appeared upon this subject from the pens of nearly all the leading advocates of this line of study that to minutely describe the system would be undoubtedly a waste of space; but for the benefit of those who have not had the opportunity to investigate the theory a light description of the course of work may prove of interest. The plan adopted by the student teachers of the California Kindergarten Training School may possibly best serve to illustrate the method in question, as it is being thoroughly and conscientiously pursued. Each student-teacher selects two children as subjects for continued study, recording in books kept for the purpose the different manifestations of character which occur each day. Once a week their reports are turned into headquarters, where they are assorted under the heads of sex, age, nationality and as nearly as possible their home environments, companions, occupations and social atmosphere. The result of this is to enable the teacher to have a more perfect understanding of child nature thereby preventing the tremendous waste of power which must necessarily occur when work of any kind is undertaken without a full knowledge of the principles involved. In nothing else can ignorance of law involve more woefully flat failures than in the training of a little child. When by means of these classes devoted to child study an enthusiastic interest shall have been aroused among parents, when every teacher shall realize that in a class of ten children she may have as many different temperaments and capabilities to deal with, and knowing how to handle the ten different dispositions to the best advantage is willing to do so, then and not till then will we have a perfect system of child education. Because some plants require a great deal of water it does not follow that all others are able to consume the same quantity; and yet the same amount of work is given to a class regardless of the capabilities of each individual child. It will probably take years before the full salutary effect of this new method of procedure will be felt in the education world, yet a sufficient amount has already been accomplished to warrant the statement that in its influence upon the future status of both pupil and teacher it is of the greatest practical value.

Many teachers do not realize that eight-tenths of the children under their care are defective physically; but systematic child study has shown that out of five thousand (5000) pupils, between fifty and sixty per cent. were found to have more or less seriously impaired eyesight. It was also discovered that in many cases the children whose eyesight was the poorest occupied the desks situated in the darkest part of the room, while the best seats were used by those whose eyesight was normal. Following this discovery of defective vision seats were changed and the evil remedied in a great degree. The tests were made

with Snellon's test cards, which were distributed among the public schools in Saginaw, Mich. The discovery of this serious physical defect among students was due solely to the newly-aroused desire for child study.

Next, the attention was turned to an examination of the children's hearing, for it was rightly argued that a teacher must have a knowledge of at least the most important physical conditions of a child before she could even hope to estimate their mental capacity. The result of this examination of hearing was as surprising as was the result of the sight tests, showing as it did a general average of twenty to twenty-five per cent. of defectives.

When we stop and consider that so many of the children in the public schools are suffering from their defective eyesight or hearing, or perhaps both, and when we again consider the acknowledged stultifying effect that these misfortunes have upon the intellect, and when we also remember that prominent physicians assert that with proper care this number could be reduced to two per cent., who can but acknowledge that this systematic course of examinations resulting from child study is worthy of everybody's hearty support?

Aside from the examination of the physical conditions of the child, the students of the "Child Study" clubs earnestly turn their attention to the study of the child's personality. The Madison University, of Wisconsin, has sent out an invaluable syllabus of "Studies of the Moral Development of Children" and "Relation of the Child to Parental Authority." Parents who are willing to assist in the proposed investigation are urged to communicate with J. F. Morse. Aid from parents would be especially valuable, for in most instances they are far more capable of judging a child's disposition than the teacher, who sees them only during school hours.

The subjects of the syllabus to be considered are classified as follows: First—"The Child's Relation to Parental Authority in Obedience. First Signs of Disobedience—Willfulness—Selfishness. Punishment and its Effects. Corporal Punishment—Other Methods of Punishment, the Manner in which Commands are Given, the Effects of Reward, Praise, Blame. Obedience from Love or Fear. Which Parent is Better Obeyed? Why? Second—"The Child's Attitude Toward Other than Parental Authority. Third—"The Child's Natural Willfulness Toward Parents and Toward Other Children.

But it is argued a teacher cannot be expected to know and remember every characteristic of each child. No, certainly not; but by thorough attention to known comparative results she can, if she will, be better able to estimate the capabilities and temperament of children of certain ages, and not, as is often done, give a child of seven the same work that is given to the child of ten. The work may be accomplished, it is true, but whereas the task is easy for the older child it is too difficult for the little one and the result is obtained at the expense of overstrained nerves and over-taxed brain. The effect of this "child study" system is as though a stone had been thrown into the educational mill pond! It has stirred its placid surface and gone clear to the bottom, while the ripples produced are reaching to the farthest shores of every land where the education of the child it at all considered.

The time is about past when a child is given so much to learn, whether or not he has the faintest idea of its meaning, and when if he can repeat it "word for word" he is supposed to have digested his literary meal. Froebel's methods will not now end when the child leaves the kindergarten, but will be carried throughout the child's school life—and let us hope throughout his whole existence.—Phil. Record.

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PUBLIC LANDS NOTICE.

On Saturday, January 2, 1897, 12 o'clock noon, at the office of J. Kaelmakule, Kailua, will be sold at auction, under the provisions of the Land Act for Cash Freeholds, Government lot known as Lot 1, Puua, North Kona. Area: 8.73 acres. Upset price: \$34.92.

On FRIDAY, January 15th, 12 o'clock noon, at the office of E. D. Baldwin, Hilo, will be sold under the provisions of the Land Act for Cash Freeholds, Lot No. 310 at Olua, containing 50 acres. Upset price: \$300.

At the same time and place will also be sold Lots 14 and 15, Olua, containing 100 acres, upon the following conditions, viz:

Upset price: \$600; one-fourth purchase price to be paid on day of sale and remainder in equal installments in one, two and three years, with interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum.

Cultivation and improvements to be begun during the first year and continue during succeeding two years. Twenty-five (25) per cent of the land to be put under cultivation and other improvements of the value of \$500 to be made before the end of the third year. At the end of third year, if full amount of cultivation and improvement has been made with full payment of purchase price, and all conditions to such date fulfilled, a Patent Grant for the premises will issue.

Full particulars can be obtained at the Public Lands Office, Honolulu, or at the office of the Sub-Agent in Hilo.

J. F. BROWN,
Agent of Public Lands.
Dated Dec. 22, 1896. 4489-3t 1823-3t

WATER NOTICE.

In accordance with Section 1, of Chapter XXVI of the Laws of 1886: All persons holding water privileges or those paying water rates, are hereby notified that the water rates for the term ending June 30, 1897, will be due and payable at the office of the Honolulu Water Works, on the 1st day of January, 1897.

All rates remaining unpaid for fifteen days after they are due will be subject to an additional 10 per cent.

Rates are payable at the office of the Water Works in the Kapualua Building.

ANDREW BROWN,
Superintendent Honolulu Water Works.
Honolulu, H. I., Dec. 17, 1896.
4485-12t

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Hawaiian Monarchy

— AND —

REVOLUTION OF 1893:

(FULLY ILLUSTRATED.)

By PROF. W. D. ALEXANDER.

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